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Workers install a sign reading "Alligator Alcatraz" at the entrance to the migrant detention facility at Dade-Collier Training and Transition facility, July 3, 2025, in Ochopee, Fla.

Associated Press.

Judge pushes for resolution in lawsuit over legal access at 'Alligator Alcatraz'

By **MIKE SCHNEIDER**
Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — A federal judge in Florida is pushing for a resolution in a lawsuit over whether detainees at an immigration center in the Florida Everglades known as "Alligator Alcatraz" are getting adequate access to attorneys. U.S. District Judge Sheri Polster Chappell last Friday

ordered a two-day conference to be held next month in her Fort Myers courtroom, with attorneys present who have the authority to settle. The judge asked for an update at a hearing next Monday. "The court will not entertain excuses regarding leaving early for flights or other meetings," the judge wrote about next month's con-

ference. The lawsuit filed by detainees against the federal and state governments over legal access is one of three federal cases challenging practices at the immigration detention center that was built this summer at a remote airstrip in the Florida Everglades by the administration of Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis.

In a separate environmental lawsuit, a federal appellate court panel in September allowed the center to continue operating by putting on hold a lower court's preliminary injunction ordering the facility to wind down by the end of October. The appeal was put on hold during the government shutdown but resumed last week.

A third lawsuit claims immigration is a federal issue and Florida agencies and private contractors hired by the state have no authority to operate the facility. President Donald Trump toured the facility in July and suggested it could be a model for future lockups nationwide as his administration pushes to expand the infrastructure needed to increase deportations. While the facility was built and operated by the state and its private contractors, federal officials have approved reimbursing Florida for \$608 million.

In the legal access case, attorneys representing detainees at the Everglades facility are seeking a preliminary injunction that will make it easier for their clients to meet and communicate with their individual attorneys. They claim that detainees' attorneys must make an appointment to visit three days in advance, unlike at other detention facilities where the lawyers can just show up during visiting hours; that detainees often are transferred to other facilities after their attorneys have made an appointment to see them; and that scheduling delays have been so lengthy that detainees are unable to meet with attorneys before key deadlines. □

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Arrests now top 250 in immigration crackdown across North Carolina

By GARY D. ROBERTSON

Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Federal agents have now arrested more than 250 people during a North Carolina immigration crackdown centered around Charlotte, the state's largest city, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security said Wednesday. The operation that began over the weekend is the latest phase of Republican President Donald Trump's aggressive mass deportation efforts that have sent the military and immigration agents into Democratic-run cities — from Chicago to Los Angeles.

Immigration officials have blanketed the country since January, pushing detention counts to all-time highs above 60,000. Big cities and small towns across the country are targeted daily amid higher-profile pushes in places such as Portland, Oregon, where more than 560 immigration arrests were made in October. Smaller bursts of enforcement have popped up elsewhere.

The push to carry out arrests in North Carolina expanded to areas around the state capital of Raleigh on Tuesday, spreading fear in at least one immigrant-heavy suburb.

The number of arrests around Charlotte and beyond dur-



Organizing director for the National Day Laborer Organizing Network Jorge Torres, center, marches alongside protestors outside of a Home Depot, Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2025, in Charlotte, N.C.

Associated Press.

ing what the government has dubbed "Operation Charlotte's Web" was about double the total announced by DHS officials earlier this week. The department said in a statement that agencies "continue to target some of the most dangerous criminal illegal aliens."

Federal officials have offered few details about those arrested. They've also remained quiet about the scope of the enforcement operations across North Carolina and where agents will show up next, keeping communities on edge.

The crackdown in Charlotte has been met with pockets of resistance and protests. About 100 people gathered outside a Home Depot store in Charlotte on Wednesday, where federal agents have been spotted multiple times since the surge started. Protest organizers briefly went inside the store with orange and white signs that read, "ICE out of Home Depot, Protect our communities." Arrests in Charlotte have created a chilling effect in immigrant neighborhoods — school attendance dropped, and small shops

and restaurants closed to avoid confrontations between customers and federal agents.

Customers at a laundromat left behind their clothes in washers and dryers and haven't returned after agents showed up at a shopping center on Sunday, said David Reboloso, who owns the business.

Agents didn't target his laundromat, but it still impacted his bottom line and shut down the neighboring shops, said Reboloso, a Mexican-American born in Brownsville, Texas.

"We're only open because I'm an American citizen, so it doesn't bother me," he said.

"But of course, business is down. I have no customers." Just days after beginning the crackdown in North Carolina, Border Patrol agents were expected to arrive in New Orleans by the end of the week to start preparing for their next big operation in southeast Louisiana, according to documents obtained by The Associated Press and three people familiar with the operation.

Around 250 federal border agents are set to descend on New Orleans in the coming weeks for a two-month immigration crackdown expected to begin in earnest on Dec. 1.

Gregory Bovino, the Border Patrol commander tapped to head the Louisiana sweep, has been on the ground in North Carolina this week, leading the operation there as well. Bovino has become the Trump administration's leader of the large-scale crackdowns and has drawn criticism over the tactics used to carry out arrests.

DHS has declined to comment on the operation. "For the safety and security of law enforcement, we're not going to telegraph potential operations," spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin said. □

Trump nominates new CFPB director, but White House says agency is still closing

By KEN SWEET

AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — President Trump nominated Stuart Levenbach as the next director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau on Wednesday, using a legal maneuver to keep his budget director Russell Vought as acting director of the bureau while the Trump administration continues on its plan to shut down the consumer financial protection agency. Levenbach is currently an associate director inside the Office of Management and Budget, handling issues related to natural resources, energy, science and water issues. Levenbach's resume shows significant experi-

ence dealing with science and natural resources issues, acting as chief of staff of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration during Trump's first term. Levenbach's nomination is not meant to go through to confirmation, an administration official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss personnel matters. Under the Vacancies Act, Vought can only act as acting director for 210 days, but now that Trump has nominated someone to the position, that clock has been suspended until the Senate approves or denies Levenbach's confirmation as director. Vought is Levenbach's boss.

The CFPB has been non-functional much of the year. Many of its employees have been ordered not to work, and the only major work the bureau is doing is unwinding the regulations and rules it put into place during Trump's first term and during the Biden administration.

The latest blow to the bureau's future came earlier this month, when the White House said it does not plan to withdraw any funds from the Federal Reserve, which is where the bureau gets its funding, to fund the bureau past Dec. 31.

The White House and the Justice Department are using a legal interpretation of the law that created the



Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought listens to members of the media outside the West Wing at the White House in Washington, Sept. 29, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press.

bureau, the Dodd-Frank Act, that the Fed must be profitable in order to fund the CFPB's operations. Since roughly 2022, the Fed has been cash-flow negative since it owns bonds from the COVID-19 pandemic

that pay very low interest but must pay out higher interest to the banks that deposit reserves with it. This means, on paper, the Fed is not earning a profit at the moment and therefore has no money to allot to the CFPB. □

Student escapes as authorities search for 24 other girls abducted in Nigeria

By **CHINEDU ASADU and TUNDE OMOLEHIN**
Associated Press

MAGA, Nigeria (AP) — A schoolgirl who was abducted with 24 others from a dormitory in northwestern Nigeria has escaped and is safe, the school's principal told The Associated Press on Tuesday, as hunters joined security forces in the search for the missing students in forests close to the school. The girls were kidnapped before dawn on Monday, when gunmen attacked the dorm at the Government Girls Comprehensive Secondary School in Kebbi state's Maga town. Local police said the gunmen scaled the fence to enter the school premises and exchanged gunfire with police officers before seizing the girls and killing a staff member.

No group has claimed responsibility for taking the girls, but analysts and locals say gangs of bandits often target schools, travelers and remote villagers in kidnappings for ransoms. Authorities say the bandits are mostly former herders who have taken up arms against farming communities after clashes between them over strained resources.

Mass school kidnappings are especially common in northern Nigeria, and the Kebbi school is close to



A general view of the school from which school children were kidnapped by gunmen in Kebbi, Nigeria, Monday, Nov 17, 2025.

conflict hot spots including Zamfara and Sokoto states, where several gangs are known to operate and hide out.

The student who escaped arrived home late Monday, hours after the kidnapping, according to the school principal Musa Rabi Magaji. Another student was able to escape the gunmen in the minutes after the raid and was not abducted, the principal told AP.

"They are safe and sound," Magaji said.

A video verified by AP shows the two schoolgirls, who appear to be in their early teens, lost in thought and surrounded by family and other villagers, with hijabs

covering their heads. High schoolers in Nigeria are usually aged between 12 and 17.

Intensified rescue efforts

Security forces and hunters, meanwhile, have intensified efforts to find and rescue the others, local officials said. Security teams swept nearby forests where gangs often hide while others were deployed along major roads leading to the school.

Kebbi Gov. Nasir Idris visited the school on Monday and assured of efforts to rescue the girls, and Nigeria's Chief of Army Staff Lt. Gen. Waidi Shaibu met with soldiers in the hours after the attack and directed "intelligence-

driven operations and relentless day-and-night pursuit of the abductors," according to an army statement.

"We must find these children. Act decisively and professionally on all intelligence. Success is not optional," the army chief said.

Families recount predawn attack

By Tuesday morning, the dorm and the classroom block — a walking distance apart — were deserted. In Maga, families waiting for news of their children's freedom expressed anger and frustration.

Resident Abdulkarim Abdullahi, whose daughter and granddaughter — aged 13

and 10, respectively — were among the kidnapped children, said he overheard the noise from his house.

"I was at home when I suddenly heard gunshots from the school. We were told that the attackers entered the school with many motor-cycles," said Abdullahi.

Amina Hassan, wife of the school vice principal Hassan Yakubu Makuku, said the assailants broke into their house, which is on the school premises, and fatally shot her husband. He was also the school's chief security officer.

"Three of them entered and asked my husband, 'Are you Malam Hassan?' and he responded, 'Yes, I am.' They told him that we are here to kill you," she told the AP.

School abductions are a strategy to draw attention

At least 1,500 students have been seized in the region since Boko Haram jihadi extremists seized 276 Chibok schoolgirls over a decade ago.

But bandits are also active in the region, and analysts say gangs often target schools to gain attention.

Analysts and residents blame the insecurity on a failure to prosecute known attackers, and the rampant corruption that limits weapons supplies to security forces while ensuring a steady supply to the gangs. □



People gather to honor late Mayor Carlos Alberto Manzo Rodríguez, who was shot during Day of the Dead celebrations, in Uruapan, Michoacan state, Mexico, Sunday, Nov. 2, 2025.

Associated Press.

Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Mexican authorities on Wednesday announced the arrest of

a man they say was involved in planning and ordering the killing of a popular mayor earlier this month in the west-

Mexican authorities arrest suspect in assassination of mayor in Michoacan

ern state of Michoacan.

Public Security Secretary Omar García Harfuch said in a news conference that investigators found the suspect through messages discovered on the cellphones of two men who were killed in the days after Uruapan Mayor Carlos Manzo's assassination and that the criminal cell he led was tied to the Jalisco New Generation Cartel.

Michoacan state prosecutor Carlos Torres Piña said that the suspect, identified only as Jorge Armando N. in keeping with Mexican

privacy rules, was arrested Tuesday afternoon.

Manzo was gunned down the night of Nov. 1, in front of dozens of people gathered for Day of the Dead festivities. The teenage gunman was killed shortly after the attack.

García Harfuch said Wednesday that the suspect was one of the leaders of a cell of a criminal organization. The bodies of two men who had allegedly had contact with the shooter before the assassination were found along a highway on Nov. 10 and their cellphones were

found the following day, he said. The analysis of those phones revealed messages about the planning of the attack.

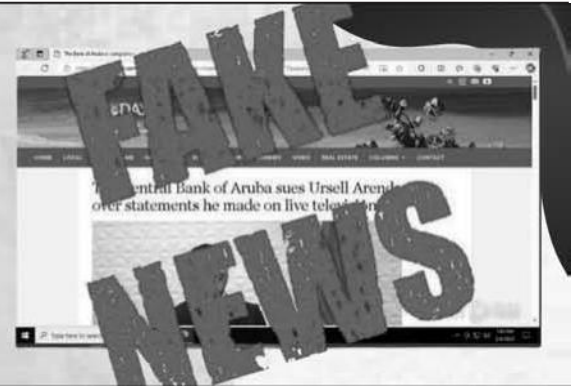
The popular mayor's killing brought renewed pressure on President Claudia Sheinbaum to adjust her security strategy.

Days later she announced Plan Michoacan, which while heavy on spending for social programs, also included having 10,000 troops spread out across the state to get control of the various criminal organizations operating there. □

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India delays climate pledge, pressures rich nations on funding at UN climate talks

By ANTON L. DELGADO and
SIBI ARASU

Associated Press

BELEM, Brazil (AP) — India is unlikely to submit its climate pledge before the end of the annual United Nations climate summit, raising questions about how the world's most populous nation can influence others on confronting climate change.

Experts say the delay may be a sign of India's displeasure with a lack of progress toward funding global climate priorities. However, this can also hurt its ability to lead at the climate talks in Brazil.

The country is considered a key player in global efforts to fight pollution and address global warming, especially as the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump has avoided the climate negotiations. But India has surprised observers as one of the few large countries yet to send the U.N. its formal climate plan, known as a Nationally Determined Contribution, or NDC.

This week at the conference, Bhupender Yadav, India's environment minister, touted how the country reached previous climate goals early. Yadav also called on rich nations to pay more to help developing countries transition to green energy and respond to climate change impacts.

"Climate change is no longer a distant manifestation, but is real and imminent," Yadav said Monday while addressing the conference. "Unsustainable growth and development have placed Mother Earth in deep stress."

Non-fossil fuel sources of energy account for more



Bhupender Yadav, minister of environment, forest and climate change of India, speaks during a plenary session at the COP30 U.N. Climate Summit, Monday, Nov. 17, 2025, in Belem, Brazil.

Associated Press.

than half of the electricity capacity of India, which achieved some of its climate goals for the decade ending in 2030, five years ahead of schedule. On the sidelines of the talks, Yadav said India will submit its updated 2035 climate goals by December, news agency Press Trust of India reported.

Delayed goals raise questions about India's climate leadership

The South Asian nation has spearheaded the formation of multiple international climate-focused organizations, such as the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and the International Solar Alliance. India is also home to a rapidly growing clean energy

sector. Over the past decade, its solar capacity has risen from just 5.7 gigawatts in 2015 to more than 125 gigawatts as of September 2025.

However, Germanwatch, a nonprofit environmental think tank, said India's climate action has fallen behind other countries the past year, partly because of its continued reliance on coal. It released its annual climate change performance index on Tuesday, dropping India from No. 10 last year to No. 23 this year. The lack of India's official climate goal has been a big topic of discussion at COP30, according to Aarti Khosla, founder of the New Delhi-based climate consultancy Climate Trends.

While India over-delivered on its previously set climate goals, Khosla said not releasing its new climate goals may have a negative impact on the country's international posturing at the conference, especially as it bids to host the 2028 climate talks.

Abhiir Bhalla, a youth adviser for the Commonwealth Human Ecology Council, said the delay of the NDC is disappointing, but he also commended the strides India has made with its expansion of renewable energy.

A strong voice on global climate finance
India has also been a vocal critic of a deal reached at the previous climate talks for countries to pro-

vide \$300 billion for climate needs, saying the sum is too low.

On Monday, Yadav called for wealthy countries to "deliver new, additional, and concessional climate finance at a scale of trillions, not billions."

Harjeet Singh, founding director of Satat Sampada Climate Foundation, said Yadav's statement is a sign that ambitious global climate plans won't be effective unless there are legal obligations for countries to follow through. At the same time, India's voice is more crucial than ever as the United States, the world's largest historical emitter, steps back from its climate commitments, he said.

"Large economies like India face more pressure to fill the void," said Singh, who has attended multiple annual climate talks.

India is looking for concrete details on global financial commitments to fight climate change, said another energy expert attending the summit.

"Something more concrete in terms of delivery of public finance and also adaptation finance is a big concern from India's side," said Vaibhav Chaturvedi, senior fellow at New Delhi-based Council on Energy, Environment and Water, a nonprofit think tank.

India's tough stand on global climate funding is welcomed by other countries, said Iskander Erzini Vernoit, director of the Moroccan think tank Imal Initiative for Climate and Development. He said that wealthy countries' commitment to climate finance "has been weak at best, and certainly not commensurate with the urgency of keeping global warming to safe levels." □



British Defence Secretary John Healey delivers a speech on how the UK's defence industry is delivering growth and national renewal across the UK, at No 9 Downing Street in central London, Wednesday Nov. 19, 2025.

Associated Press.

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain warned Russia on Wednesday that it was ready to deal with any incursion into its territory after the spy ship Yantar was detected on the edge of U.K. waters north of Scotland.

Defense Secretary John Healey said the Russian vessel had directed lasers at pilots of surveillance aircraft monitoring its activities.

"My message to Russia and to Putin is this: We see you. We know what you're doing. And if the Yantar travels south this week, we are ready," Healey said during a speech in London.

The Russian embassy in a statement accused the British government of being "Russophobic" and "whipping up militaristic hysteria," adding that Moscow has no interest in undermining the

UK warns Russia it's ready to deal with any incursion after spy ship is spotted

U.K.'s security.

Healey issued the warning as he made the case for increased defense spending a week before the government releases its new budget. While Prime Minister Keir Starmer has pledged big increases in military spending in the face of threats from Russia, China and Iran, the government is facing tough choices as it eyes tax increases and spending cuts to close a multi-billion-pound shortfall in its finances.

Healey also announced plans to build at least six new munitions factories at sites from Scotland to Wales. The government in June committed 1.5 billion pounds (\$2 billion) to build the plants, which it says will create at least 1,000 jobs, drive economic growth and insure that the military has a constant supply of explosives, propellants and pyrotechnics.

British officials said the Yantar is part of the Russian navy, designed to conduct surveillance in peacetime and sabotage during times of war. Because of this, the U.K. and its allies track the ship and work to deter its operations whenever it approaches British territorial waters.

"It is part of a Russian fleet designed to put and hold our undersea infrastructure and those of our allies at risk," Healey said, referencing attacks on pipelines and cables under the Baltic Sea earlier this year.

This isn't the first time the Yantar has probed Britain's defenses, Healey said. After a warning last year, the Yantar left U.K. waters for the Mediterranean. When the Russian ship later sailed through the English Channel in January, it was followed by HMS Somerset, a frigate assigned to homeland defense.

Healey said the U.K. must adjust to a "new era of hard power." He cited the conflict in the Middle East, troubles between India and Pakistan and Chinese spies targeting democratic institutions in the U.K., as well as the war in Ukraine.

Britain in June pledged to increase defense spending to 5% of gross domestic product by 2035, in line with most other NATO nations. The commitment includes 3.5% of GDP on core defense spending, with another 1.5% on infrastructure projects designed to support the nation's defense. The U.K. spent about 2.3% of GDP on defense last year.

"This is a new era of threat. It demands a new era for defense, an era of hard power, strong allies and of sure diplomacy," Healey said. "And as the threat grows, Britain must step up, and we are." □

Indonesia's Mount Semeru erupts, blanketing villages with ash and prompting evacuations

Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Indonesia's Mount Semeru, the highest peak on Java island, erupted Wednesday, blanketing several villages with falling ash, prompting evacuations and leading authorities to raise the alert to the highest level.

Mount Semeru in East Java province unleashed searing clouds of hot ash and a mixture of rock, lava and gas that traveled up to 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) down its slopes several times from midday to dusk, while a thick column of hot clouds rose 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) into the air, Indonesia's Geology Agency said in a statement.

The eruptions that unfolded throughout the day forced authorities to raise the volcano's alert level twice, from the third-highest level to the highest, the agency said. No casualties have been reported.

More than 300 residents in the three villages most at risk in the district of Lumajang were evacuated to government shelters, said National Disaster



In this photo released by the Geological Agency (Badan Geologi) of Indonesia's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Mount Semeru releases volcanic materials during an eruption in Lumajang, East Java, Indonesia, Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2025.

Associated Press.

Mitigation Agency's spokesperson Abdul Muhari. He said increased activity of the volcano on Wednesday afternoon prompted authorities to widen the danger zone to 8 kilometers (5 miles) from the crater. People were ad-

vised to keep away from an area along the Besuk Kobokan River, which is the path of the lava flow as searing gas flowed down Semeru's slopes. Videos on social media showed a dense cloud of ash

sweeping through a forested valley to a river beneath a bridge. Residents, some with faces smeared with volcanic dust and rain, fled to temporary shelters or left for other safe areas.

Local media reported that authorities are struggling to rescue about 178 people stranded on the 3,676-meter (12,060-foot) mountain at the Ranu Kumbolo monitoring post. The group includes 137 climbers, 15 porters, 7 guides and 6 tourism officials, according to an official with the Bromo-Tengger-Semeru National Park, TNBTS.

"They are currently safe at Ranu Kumbolo monitoring post," Endrip Wahyutama, a TNBTS spokesperson, said in video statement, adding that the post is located 4.5 kilometers (2.7 miles) from the crater on the northern slope of the mountain, which is not in the path of the hot cloud flow that was observed moving to south-southeast. Bad weather and rain forced them to spend the night there, he said.

Semeru, also known as Mahameru, has erupted numerous times in the past 200 years. Still, as is the case with many of the 129 active volcanoes in Indonesia, tens of thousands of people continue to live on its fertile slopes. □

Why You Should Not Miss Aruba's Free City Center Street Car Tour

(Oranjestad)—Aruba's City Center Street Car – or as we call it in Dutch; "Tram van Oranjestad" – is a single track tram line in Oranjestad, the capital city of Aruba. It was inaugurated on 22 December 2012, being the first and so far the only passenger rail service on Aruba and the rest of the Dutch Caribbean. There are two trolleys, a single-deck one with 42 seats and a double-decker with 64 seats. The line was inspired by the popular battery-powered streetcar operation at the Grove in Los Angeles, USA. Aruba's streetcars are powered by hydrogen fuel cells, which are charged by the island's year-round trade winds.

Caya Betico Croes, mostly

referred to as our "main street" has been developed into a pollution-free pedestrian mall. The double-decker offers you a 360 degree view of the downtown area with a picture perfect scenery of the island's clear blue skies. Who would not enjoy a ride on this beautiful and naturally air-conditioned vehicle? The tour consists of a total of 9 stops approximately 200 meters apart from each other; all stops are clearly marked. The tram will bring you close to different museums, historical plazas, monuments, the Protestant church, Aruba's high-end mall, retail shops, and a variety of local and international cuisine restaurants. The "I love Aruba" trademark also belongs to



that list. The third stop on the route is close to a 5-minute walk to the famous Renaissance Marina showcasing luxurious yachts and Aruba's blue waters.

The "Tram van Oranjestad" starts from a balloon loop near the Port of Call and serves the downtown area and ends at Plaza Nicky. The first ride starts at 10:00 am sharp with intervals of

25 minutes. The last trolley departs from the cruise port at 5:00 pm. Don't miss this tour of the beautiful Aruba's City Center – it is free for all! ☐

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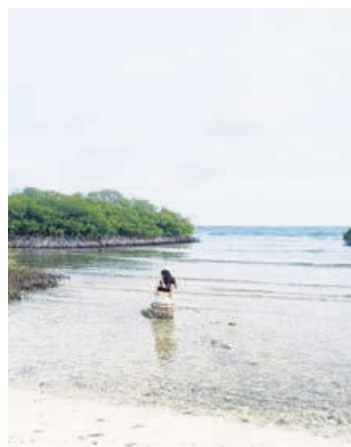
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A guide for the perfect picture: Where to find the most Instagrammable places in Aruba



(Oranjestad)—Imagine, you're out and about on the island and you want to take the most picture-perfect photo to show your friends and family back home and online. It seems like the perfect spot can be hard to find, but Aruba is full of great spots for a quick snapshot! Here are the most Instagrammable places in Aruba.



"I LOVE ARUBA"
Right on Paardenbaai Plaza, near the harbor en-

trance, you will spot a giant sign that reads "I LOVE ARUBA". A great first stop

for a quick shot with the family, this spot is among the few that has become a



favorite among tourists, especially those that are visiting Aruba through a cruise vacation. Speaking of giant signs that read "Aruba" (because there can never be too many), there is another sign you can find along the Linear Park. It may be a long walk from the harbor to get there, but while you're at it, check out these other spots along the way!

Mangel Halto

For a different take on beach photos, we definitely recommend Mangel Halto! You can get in the water right by the roots of these beautiful trees (please be careful not to climb them, though!). You will see beautiful skies, birds and other wildlife, and among the greenery of the mangroves, your picture is sure to pop!

Wooden Swing on Plaza Daniel Leo

While you're in Mainstreet Oranjestad, check out the wooden swing on Plaza Daniel Leo. This is another favorite among visitors wanting a cute snapshot for Instagram. Since you've made it this far, one question: How many blue horses have you spotted already?

Renaissance Dock

Last but certainly not least, the Renaissance Dock is the perfect spot to take a beautiful picture, especially at sunset. The dock is located behind the Wilhelmina Park. This spot offers a gorgeous view of the ocean and sunset, accompanied by the soft waves crashing on the shoreline. You may even spot some iguanas! □

Dining in? Try making some local favorites! How to make "funchi"

(Oranjestad)—One of the most famous Aruban snacks or appetizers is "funchi hasa" (fried polenta sticks), a super easy meal that adults and children will both enjoy. Here's how to make it!

Before we start, get to know the basics

What is funchi hasa? Funchi, or Aruban polenta, is a popular side dish for local dishes, like soups, stews and fried fish. Made from a corn flour, water and butter mixture, this appetizer is traditionally eaten alongside a warm meal.



However, locals also like to fry sticks of funchi for a quick and filling snack.

Ingredients (measured by heart)

1. Polenta flour/Funchi flour
2. Water
3. Butter
4. Salt to taste

Directions

Bring water to a boil in a medium-sized sauce pan. Add in some salt and butter to taste in the boiling water and let this dissolve and melt. Then, gradually add the flour while stirring with a wooden spoon. The mixture will start to begin to harden pretty fast, so be careful not to add too much. At this phase of cooking, you want a goopy thick mixture, but thin enough so you can continue to stir to get all the lumps out.

After reaching a semi-firm, yet flexible texture, grab a baking pan or any large, deep plate, and pour the mixture in. Be sure that this plate is wet or greased so that the mixture does not



stick to the bottom. Let this cool completely while it firms up for the last time. Once it's cooled you can enjoy it as is, topped with some butter or shredded cheese. Or, you can take it to another level of deliciousness.

When your funchi is firm enough, cut it into strips (size is up to you). Heat up some oil in a pan and fry those babies up! After frying, you can top it with some cheese or enjoy it with your favorite dipping sauce. □

Photo credit of fried funchi sticks: Jacqueline Felida on Pinterest.

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National Park Arikok: Aruba's biggest nature conservation

The National Park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There are numerous animals to discover, for example the bright blue Cododo or mighty Warawara.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: A majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heading back to the ocean after laying her eggs during breeding season. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Nature Conservation

The protected area of National Park Arikok was officially established in 2000. Arikok National Park is a 34 square kilometers (7907 acres) of natural area, lo-



cated at the north-eastern part of Aruba which contains examples of most of the island's flora and fauna against a backdrop of great geological complexity. We are proud to state that approximately 18% of the total land area of Aruba is assigned as a National Park, to protect and preserve the flora, fauna, geology and historical remains present within Arikok National Park.

The Landscape

There is a great geological variety within the park. The main aspects are the rough hills of the volcanic Aruba lava formation, the mysterious rocks of the batholithic quartz-diorite/tonalite, and the limestone rocks from fossilized coral. The two tallest hills on the island are situated within the park. Jamanota hill 188 meters (617 ft) and Arikok hill 176 meters (577 ft), from which the name of the park is derived.

The line of the permanently wind-and-wave beaten North Coast is broken by several bays (boca's). Most of them are small yet impressive

inlets at the mouth of dry riverbeds. Some of these bays (boca's) are spectacular sights, adorned with white, sandy beaches and sand dunes, as is the case at Boca Prins and Dos Playa.

Arikok is also home to Conchi, Aruba's most important natural attraction; also known as The Natural Pool. The journey to the Pool is and adventure by itself and only possible by foot, horse, or 4x4 vehicle. As of 2020, ATV's and UTVs are not allowed in the park due to its significant impact on nature.

Cultural and Historical components

There are a number of sites within the park that attest to the history of Aruba. The Caquetío Indians left rock paintings in Cunucu Arikok and Fontein Cave.

Old plantation (Cunucus) sites tell the story of an active yet challenging agricultural past.

These Cunucus were also residential areas for the few families that worked the

land. These families found ways to survive in the difficult conditions, and were able to erect their homes with materials found in the area. Two of these adobe houses have been restored. Park rangers are learning many of the old building techniques in order to preserve this unique Aruban mud-house. At Cunucu Arikok and near Plantation Prins you can find these adobe houses.

Park Management

The Aruba Conservation Foundation (ACF), formerly known as Aruba National Park Foundation, manages the national park. This foundation was established in July 2003. In February 2017, mangrove and wetland RAMSAR site #198 Spanish Lagoon was annexed to Arikok National Park due to its importance as a feeding and breeding area for water birds and as a nursery area for a variety of marine organisms. With this addition, the areas under management increased by 70 hectares while the amount of spe-

cies of flora and fauna to be conserved to over 250. On December 21st, 2018 (AB 2018 no. 77) Parke Marino Aruba – currently consisting of four marine protected areas (MPAs) – was officially established and subsequently brought under management of ACF. In 2019, preliminary management plan for marine were introduced for Parke Marino to conserve reefs, seagrass beds, and mangrove forests and in 2020 ACF was given additional management areas such as the Saliñas (Druif, Malmok, Cerca, Palm Beach, Bubali etc.) and also additional areas such as Rooi Manonchi, Ser'I Teishi etc. Managed areas can be seen here: <https://acf.aw/>.

Visit the National Park Arikok to see the wonder of Aruba's nature. The visitor center in San Fuego and entrance in Vader Piet (San Nicolas) is open daily from 8:00 AM to 16:00 PM. Contact the ACF via e-mail, info@acf.aw or call +297 585 1234 for more information. □



Aruba: The island of Aloes



ORANJESTAD – Aloe Vera, a succulent plant species, is renowned for its incredible properties for the skin. It is widely distributed and usually grows in tropical, semi-tropical and arid climates on the planet. But this plant also had a very prominent role in the history of Aruba, and its significance to the island's economy endures to this day.

The leaves of Aloe Vera contain a good amount of gel which when used topically, is great for the skin. Traditionally, Arubans use this gel to treat minor burns and other skin ailments, or just to keep skin supple and looking bright and nourished. Aside from the gel, aloe contains a bitter, yellow substance (called aloin) which is a gentle but powerful laxative, and it is also the origin of the

industry of aloe in Aruba.

Aloe vera was introduced in Aruba around 1840, when most of the island's inhabitants were farmers of little means. Dutch Governor Van Raders introduced the plant after it had been introduced in other islands of the Caribbean to cultivate and harvest the aloe to produce the laxative.

Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes."

Under Commander Jan Helenus Ferguson (1866-1871), aloe experienced a boom, which is why there is a road named after him, which goes through the aloe fields. In the 19th century, Aruba was the main supplier of aloin for laxative, which was imported abroad to the United States and Europe. The aloin from Aruba and Curaçao was known to be one of the best in the world and was more expensive, which meant that at the time, it had significant eco-



nomic impact, particularly for the local farmers.

However, by the time the oil industry arrived on Aruba, it changed the labor market on Aruba, shifting away from agriculture. It would be after World War II that aloe would make a comeback. And eventually, as science learned about the amazing properties of aloe gel, the industry shifted from producing laxative to producing skin care. An interesting fact is that in 1951, the production of Aruban aloe amounted to around 30 percent of the total global production!

The impact and relevance of aloe is visible all around Aruba. While most homes will have a few plants for personal use and decoration, houses are also decorated with aloe motifs, and at some point, aloe even featured on post stamps. Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes." And in 1955, the aloe became a part of Aruba's coat of arms, symbolizing prosperity for the island. □

Images from the archive of the National Library of Aruba.

Planning on snorkeling? Get to know our Candelchi!

ORANJESTAD—If you're ever planning on snorkeling during your vacation on Aruba, you may spot fish that you can't recognize. One of these may be the "Candelchi" (Squirrelfish),

a common, yet shy fish that swims all year long in the waters of Aruba.

Let's talk about the names of fish. Do you know your fish? The Department of

Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries, known as Santa Rosa, offers this informative article that illustrates some fish and their names in Papiamentu.

Candelchi, Squirrelfish, *Holocentrus adscensionis*:

Candelchi actually refers to the entire squirrelfish family or, as some say, when we say candelchi, we mean several different species but without distinguishing them by species. In this picture, we are showing the most common one in our waters, which is called squirrelfish in English or scientifically known as *Holocentrus adscensionis*.

Under candelchi, we in Aruba generally refer to all the different species of squirrelfish. They all look alike and it's really difficult to distinguish between them.

The squirrelfish family is distinguished by the following characteristics. They are heart-shaped with pink or red hues and often show heart-shaped streaks between the scales along the body. They have hard fins and are always armed.

Over at our sister island Curaçao, they are called "bari di clabo" (nail barrel) for that reason.

In our waters, there are 7 to 8 types or species present and they are sometimes caught and seen occasionally. They can be distinguished by different marks such as color on the dorsal spine or marks on the body.

In Aruba:

Candelchi are found on reefs or areas with structure in the water where they can hide. Although they prefer to hunt for food at night, they are also active during the day. They are edible and delicious when prepared dry and crispy with lime. It is particularly challenging to scale the fish, which is why it is not one of the favorites among fishermen. They often live in groups. □



Aruba's cultural and literary development: Then and now

(Oranjestad)—The Aruban culture has seen many substantial developments over the course of a century. With the introduction of the Lago Refinery at the turn of the 20th century, followed by the breakout of the Second World War and the general incentive for political independence during the mid-century, a cultural identity on the island began to take form and have since developed through international and local influences.

In the pre-industrial era of the 19th century, much could not be said about a cultural identity on the island. Still being a part of a Dutch colonial territory at the same, as well as not having political or economic autonomy (Curacao was the center of commerce, cultural life, and political management of the Netherland Antilles at the time), the small population of Aruba consisted mostly of farmers and fishermen, tending to their crops and their cattle, or going out to fish to provide for their family. As Quito Nicolaas states in his article *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* (Literary History of Aruba: Cultural Life), "during the pre-industrial period, there were no significant economic activity that could have created a cultural ambience, with only one way to generate profit at the time for the sub existence of Aruban families."

It wasn't until the introduction of the Lago Refinery in San Nicolas in 1928, that the island saw a small boom in cultural manifestations and entertainment, as farmers left the 'cunucu' (country) life to work in the refinery, which resulted in Aruba acquiring a different economic pillar. Before this, entertainment and cultural manifestations



were mostly experiences by local parishes and the island's elite, who often partook in cultural and entertaining activities around the island, like going to the movie theater or coming together to share poetry on Sundays after church.

Literary life

Throughout the 19th century and up until the 1940s, there were also not much trace of a cultural climate for the cultural-literary sector on the island. Primary education was introduced on the island mid-19th century, followed by secondary and higher education around the late 30's and 40's. It wasn't until the 1950s, with the introduction of the E.R.N.A agreement in 1951 and the signing of the Statute in 1954, which allowed more space for and control over the economic and cultural development of Aruba, that the literary life on the island began to grow substantially

compared to decades before. This was in response to local institutions established in the 1940s for cultural and literary growth on the island, but that did not yet capture the attention of the general public. The 1950 brought with it a boom of literary production on the island, like those of V.S. Piterella, as well as migrant authors José Ramón Vicioso y Rings William Rufus, who have also contributed to the literary development on the island. The literary movement was further promoted by local broadcasters Voz di Aruba and Radio Kelkboom, with their regular broadcast of literary works.

The 50s and 60s also saw the influence of international cultures, especially that of the United States. During this time, because of international influences as well as the continued prosperity of the oil refinery, cultural traditions in Aruba began to really take form and

become widespread, as different worldly and local concepts were introduced in the Aruban society. With the establishment of local television broadcast station Tele-Aruba in 1963, and with time and possibilities, local programs such as "Nos Tera" ("Our Land") started to pay more attention to the Aruban culture and worked to form a cultural consciousness in the community. The 1960s also saw the rise of local authors and artists, who were more comfortable in producing works in our native tongue, Papiamentu, but who also produced works in Spanish, English and Dutch. This new phenomenon was in response to the interaction between economic growth, individual prosperity, cultural life and literary expression.

The 21st century

Nowadays, international influence on our culture is still prevalent, especially those from Latin America, the United States and The Netherlands. Nevertheless, there also exists a strong cultural identity and traditions that are exclusive to the Aruban culture, often manifesting during traditional celebrations, like Dia di San Juan/Dera Gay (St. John's Day), Dia di Himno y Bandera (National Hymn and Flag Day), Camping during Easter and much more. With the surge of social media in the last decade, artistic voices, especially those of the younger generation, has become even more prevalent and easily accessible to the community of Aruba through online platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. □

Source: *Historia di Literatura Arubiano: E Bida Cultural* by J.R. "Quito" Nicolaas



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

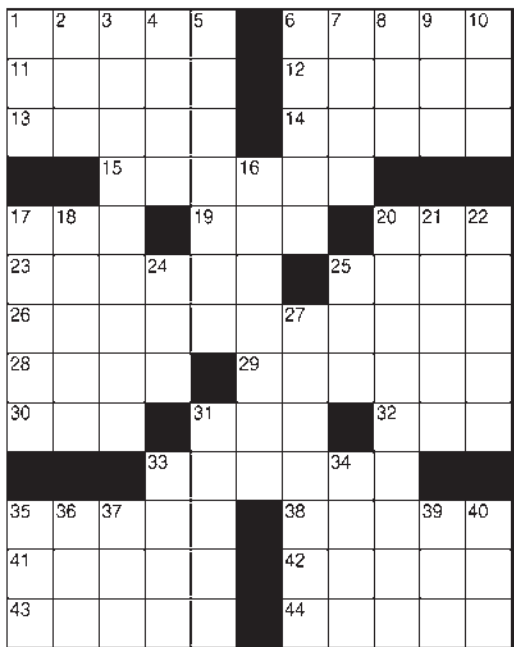
- 1 Hay sites
6 Stylist's spot
11 "Cats" poet
12 Banish category
14 African grassland
15 Tooth layer
17 Gadot of "Wonder Woman"
19 Impair
20 Diet no-no
23 Out of bed
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26 They say they're free, in life
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29 Flip
30 Snaky shape
31 Cove
32 Stew sphere
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35 November birthstone
38 Heap of fiction
41 Not dozing
42 Simpleton
43 Floppy cap
44 Door sign

DOWN

- 1 Relay section
2 Corrida cry
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6 Cut off
7 Skating jump
8 Rap's — Nas X
9 Outdated
10 Pay stub line
16 Snare
17 Social blunder
18 Spring sign

S P E A R Y A N K
P O P P A M E L O N
A L I E N E A G L E
C A T S K A R A T E
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C O P C I A M I A
O P E N U P S I N G
D E C O R M A R I O
E R A S E E L A N D
S A N E H E L G A

- 20 Contract details
21 Trig topic
22 Physicist Nikola
24 Ready to go
25 Pop's daughter
27 Hit song of 1968
31 "Carmen" composer
33 Confiscate
34 Give — for one's money
35 Bar bill
36 Need to pay
37 Golf goal
39 Hole in one
40 That woman



11-30

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

11-30

CRYPTOQUOTE

R G B X I B A I U B F Z L K B H A K D A C

L X P Z K D H A K D A C , J G B D Z L X

F J K L E M G J B X A C J D A C K F A C U .

— U L X M F J A X G C M G B F

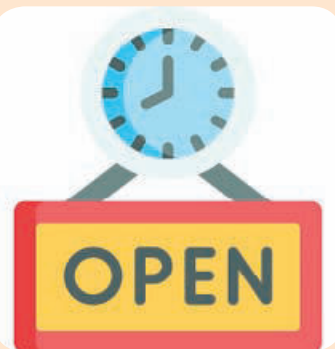
Cryptoquote: HOME ISN'T WHERE YOU'RE FROM; IT'S WHERE YOU FIND LIGHT WHEN ALL GROWS DARK. — PIERCE BROWN

Cruise ship Schedule: Nov. 17 - 23 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	CALLS
MON	17	CELEBRITY ASCENT	08.00	18.00	C	1
TUE	18	BRITANNIA	07.00	18.00	B	1
		SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
		OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	I	1
WED	19	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	08.00	23.00	B	1
		OCEANIA ALLURA	10.00	22.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
THU	20	AIDASOL	08.00	18.00	B	1
		CARIBBEAN PRINCESS	09.00	22.00	C	1
SAT	22	AIDAPERLA	09.00	22.00	C	1
		ROYAL CLIPPER	09.00	18.00	B	1
SUN	23	MSC DIVINA	08.00	18.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 8 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



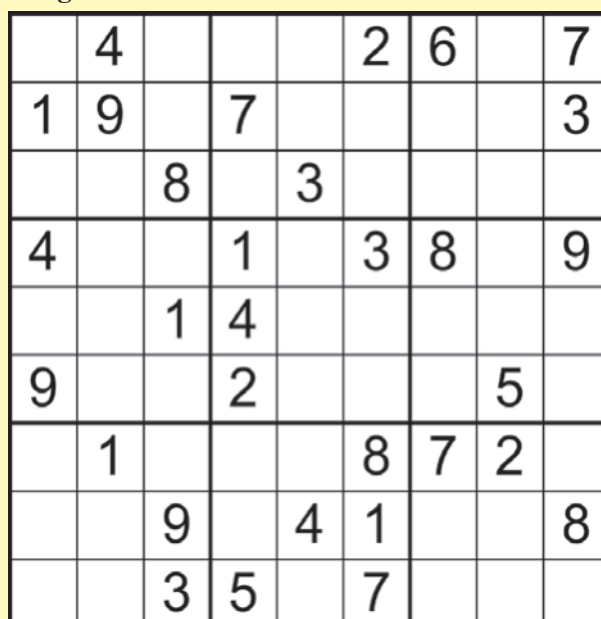
Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku



Difficulty: ★★★

11/20

Answer to previous puzzle

3	6	7	2	1	8	4	5	9
9	1	5	6	3	4	2	7	8
8	4	2	9	5	7	3	6	1
2	5	4	8	6	3	9	1	7
7	8	3	5	9	1	6	4	2
1	9	6	4	7	2	5	8	3
5	3	8	7	2	6	1	9	4
4	2	9	1	8	5	7	3	6
6	7	1	3	4	9	8	2	5

Difficulty: ★★★

11/19

Dutch government relinquishes control of Chinese-owned chipmaker Nexperia

By **CHAN HO-HIM and
KELVIN CHAN**

AP Business Writers

HONG KONG (AP) — The Dutch government said Wednesday it's relinquishing control of Chinese-owned chipmaker Nexperia, easing a standoff between China and the Netherlands that threatened supplies of semi-conductors vital for global auto manufacturing.

Economics Affairs Minister Vincent Karremans said he was suspending an earlier order to take control of Nexperia under a rarely invoked Cold War-era law.

The Dutch government had cited national security concerns and "serious governance shortcomings" when it took effective control of Nexperia, which is headquartered in the city of Nijmegen but owned by China's Wingtech Technology. Officials said they were trying to prevent the loss of crucial tech know-how that could threaten Europe's economic security.

Nexperia chips are widely used by carmakers in North America, Japan and South Korea. Automakers warned in recent weeks that they were running low on the chips, and Honda was forced to shut down a factory in Mexico producing its popular HR-V crossover for

North American markets. Karremans said he was suspending his order issued in late September as a "show of goodwill" in a decision that came after "constructive meetings" with Chinese authorities over the past few days.

"In light of recent developments, The Netherlands has considered it the right moment to take a constructive step by suspending my order under the Goods Availability Act," he said in a statement. "We are positive about the measures already taken by the Chinese authorities to ensure the supply of chips to Europe and the rest of the world."

A Dutch court decision limiting Wingtech's control over Nexperia "remains a key obstacle to resolving the issue", the ministry said. It added both countries should continue to work together on the matter.

The dispute is an example of how Europe is caught between Washington and Beijing in their rivalry over trade and tech. Netherlands issued its seizure order after the United States last year put Wingtech on its "entity list" of companies that face export controls, and then expanded it in September to include subsidiaries including Nexperia. □

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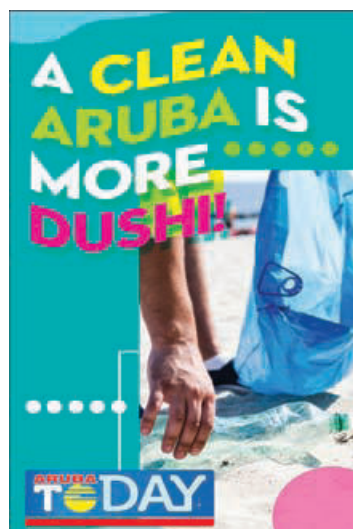
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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

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American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS



Texas man indicted on murder charge in shooting of 'King of the Hill' voice actor Jonathan Joss

By JUAN A. LOZANO

Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — A grand jury in Texas has indicted the man accused of killing "King of the Hill" voice actor Jonathan Joss on a murder charge.

But it is unclear whether Joss' killing will be considered a hate crime. Police in San Antonio did not immediately return an email seeking comment Wednesday on whether its investigation had determined that Joss' sexual orientation played a role in his shooting, and the Bexar County District Attorney's Office declined to comment on the matter.

Police allege Sigfredo Ceja Alvarez, 57, confronted Joss and his husband on June 1 as they were checking their mail at their San Antonio home, which had been burned down in January.

Joss' husband, Tristan Kern de Gonzales, has claimed the person who killed the actor yelled "violent homophobic slurs" before opening fire.

Ceja Alvarez's attorneys did not immediately return



In this image taken from video provided by KSAT, Jonathan Joss, an actor best known for his voice work on the animated television series "King of the Hill," talks to reporters following a fire at his San Antonio, Texas, home on Jan. 23, 2025.

Associated Press.

emails seeking comment Wednesday.

In June, Alfonso Otero, one of Ceja Alvarez's attorneys, said his client was innocent and denied making any homophobic statements.

The grand jury returned the

indictment Monday, and Ceja Alvarez remains free on a \$200,000 bond.

A friend of the 59-year-old Joss has said that Joss and Ceja Alvarez were neighbors and the two had argued for years. Initially, San Antonio

police had said there was no evidence indicating the shooting was related to Joss' sexual orientation. But San Antonio Police Chief William McManus later walked back that statement, saying it had been "premature" and that

whether Joss' sexual orientation played a role in the shooting was "part of the investigation."

The district attorney's office said in a statement Wednesday that Ceja Alvarez "is charged with murder, which is the most serious charge applicable to this crime under Texas law. As the case is still pending, no additional details or information can be released at this time."

Under Texas law, a hate crime — if there's a conviction — would be handled as an enhancement during sentencing and not as a separate charge.

Joss was the voice of John Redcorn, a Native American character on the popular "King of the Hill" animated series, which ran for 13 seasons from 1997 to 2008. A reboot of the show, which Joss had already worked on, premiered in August.

Joss also had a recurring role on the television show "Parks and Recreation," playing Chief Ken Hotate. He appeared in two episodes of the series "Tulsa King" in 2022. □

Actor Danny Masterson asks for rape convictions to be tossed over lawyer errors

By ANDREW DALTON

AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — "That '70s Show" actor Danny Masterson filed a petition Monday for his two rape convictions and long prison sentence to be thrown out, saying that his trial lawyer failed to call key witnesses and introduce essential evidence that might have exonerated him.

The petition for habeas corpus filed with California's 2nd District Court of Appeal argues that lawyer Philip Cohen did not represent Masterson properly at the 2023 retrial that ended with the actor being convicted of raping two women at his Los Angeles home in 2003. He was sentenced to 30 years to life in prison.

The petition also argues that the trial judge demonstrated a bias against the Church of Scientology, allowing an



Danny Masterson appears at the CMT Music Awards in Nashville, Tenn., June 7, 2017.

Associated Press.

"unconstitutional intrusion" into the church's doctrine and a misinterpretation of its scripture. Masterson is a member of the church, whose practices were a major issue at his trial, and the women are former members. The petition says that Cohen spoke to only two of the 20 potential witnesses

brought to his attention by his co-counsel and an investigator. It says the witnesses included some who would have testified that the women spoke favorably of the sexual relationships they had with Masterson. And they included psychological and pharmacological experts who would have testified

about the effects of alcohol and drugs on memory. The court filing says there was "unexpected and unreasonable failure of trial counsel to present any of the mountain of exculpatory evidence" that had been amassed by Masterson's pretrial attorney Shawn Holley, and the result was a violation of his constitutional rights. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Charlene F. Olmedo declined to delay Masterson's first trial to accommodate Holley's representation of former Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Trevor Bauer against his own allegations of sexual misconduct. Cohen then took over as lead attorney.

Masterson's first trial ended in a mistrial with a jury unable to reach consensus on any of three rape counts against him. He was promptly retried, and a jury found him guilty of two counts while failing to

reach a verdict on the third. Cohen did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment on the petition, nor did an attorney for the women.

"The unfairness of the second Masterson trial was the result of prosecutorial misconduct, judicial bias, and the failure of defense counsel to present exculpatory evidence," Eric Multhaup, the attorney who filed the petition for Masterson, said in a statement. "The jury heard only half the story — the prosecution's side. Danny deserves a new trial where the jury can hear his side as well."

The petition says Olmedo erred in allowing the prosecution to negatively cast the Church of Scientology as a force of intimidation. It alleges that Cohen also did not present available evidence that would countered the portrayal. □

Haiti's troubles fade briefly as it revels in World Cup qualification

By **DÁNICA COTO and EVENS SANON**

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— Haiti held its breath for nearly two hours as its troubles seemed to fade with the promise of its first World Cup qualification since 1974. Forgotten ever so briefly was the violence, hunger and homelessness after Loucius Deedson scored nine minutes into Tuesday's game against Nicaragua, and Ruben Providence followed up with a header just before halftime in a 2-0 win to send Haiti to the World Cup for just the second time in the country's history.

Shouts in Haitian Creole of "Grenadye, alasol!" filled the country's streets, homes and makeshift shelters as fans urged their team, the Grenadiers, to attack.

Haiti didn't just need a win over Nicaragua; it wanted to prove that despite the multiple crises weighing the country down, it could still pull through and hold its head high like it has throughout its troubled history.

"It means more than just a win. It is hope, it is unity at a time when the country faces so many challenges," said Pierre Jean-Jacques, a 25-year-old mechanic who watched the game at home. "I was fully focused.



Fans celebrate Haiti's qualification for the 2026 FIFA World Cup after a soccer match against Nicaragua, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Tuesday, Nov. 18, 2025.

Associated Press.

My heart was racing." After the match, he joined thousands of fans who bounced late into the night through streets normally empty at that hour out of fear of being killed or kidnapped. "This victory brings a moment of joy," he said. "I'm proud. I believe we can rise together."

Tuesday night's win coincided with the 222nd anniversary of the historic Battle of Vertières, which helped Haiti become the world's first Black republic.

"They couldn't have cho-

sen a better date for our warriors to go to the World Cup," said Vladimir Dorvale, 18, who had a small Haitian flag tied around his neck and was walking briskly to a friend's house to talk about the game.

But the odds were against Haiti, where euphoria remained high on Wednesday. The team played all their home games in the tiny Dutch Caribbean island of Curaçao because it was too dangerous to do so in Haiti, where armed gangs control up to 90% of its capital, Port-

au-Prince.

Their coach, Sébastien Mi-gné, told France Football magazine that he remotely managed certain players who were in Haiti. He couldn't fly to the country where gang violence has shut down the main international airport several times. When Deedson knocked the first ball in, gunfire erupted in André Michaud's neighborhood, startling the 23-year-old student who watched the game at a bar near his house because it had a generator and the power was

out again.

"I didn't know if the gangs had invaded," he said, adding that he settled down after realizing it was celebratory.

"All my life, I've been supporting other teams in the World Cup: Brazil, Argentina," he said. "Now, I can finally support my country. I'm hopeful that Haiti can go far."

Shortly after the victory, a joyful crowd marched through the narrow streets of one neighborhood under the rain, playing music and chanting, "Haiti has qualified! We don't have a state!" in reference to the deep political instability rocking Haiti. Thousands of other fans danced through the streets of Pétionville late into the night.

When gunfire erupted briefly during the celebration, the crowd raised its hands and cheered. Such noise normally scatters people in a country where more than 4,300 were killed from January to September.

"I hope you guys are going to enjoy it. It's not finished. It's just the start," forward Duckens Nazon said after the game in a video posted online. "There are many people who didn't believe in us, but us, we believe in us." □

UN urges all nations to observe a truce during the Winter Olympics in Italy

By **EDITH M. LEDERER**

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The

U.N. General Assembly on Wednesday urged all nations to observe a truce during the Winter Olympics in Italy, saying a halt to fighting during one of the world's premiere sporting events can be "a tool to promote peace, dialogue, tolerance and reconciliation." The adoption of the resolution by consensus in the 193-nation world body was greeted with applause from diplomats, the International Olympic Committee and sports representatives. The resolution recalled the ancient Greek tradition of ekecheiria, or Olympic Truce, to encourage a peaceful environment and ensure safe passage and participation of athletes in the games,

"thereby mobilizing the youth of the world to the cause of peace."

The 2026 Winter Olympics in Cortina and Milan run from Feb. 4 to Feb. 26, followed by the Paralympics from March 6 to March 15.

The General Assembly revived calls for an Olympic Truce in 1993 after an appeal from the International Olympic Committee allowed athletes of war-torn Yugoslavia, which was on the brink of breaking up, to participate in the 1992 Summer Games in Barcelona.

Unfortunately, many countries in the past have refused to heed the appeal, and whether it will have any impact on the major conflicts today remains to be seen. International Olympic Committee President Kirsty Cov-

entry told the assembly just before the resolution's adoption that in a world where "conflict and division continue to cause untold suffering" the Olympic Games "can offer a rare space where people meet not as adversaries but as fellow human beings." She said the Olympic Truce is "a call to set aside what divides us and rather to focus on what unites us." But she stressed that athletes can't do this alone. She urged all countries "to keep sport and politics apart" and ensure that athletes are not denied visas for politically motivated reasons. She said athletes "must not be judged on where they come from, but rather on their sporting merits."

Italy's Giovanni Malagò, president of the organizing



People walk next to a 2026 Milano Cortina Winter Olympics advertising in front of the Duomo gothic cathedral, in Milan, Italy, Thursday, Nov. 13, 2025.

Associated Press.

committee for the Winter Olympics, introduced the resolution.

"At a time of growing discord and conflict, sport and the Olympic Games can provide a beacon of hope, an alternative to rivalry and division," he said.

While the Olympics are founded on competition, Malagò said, "throughout their history they have demonstrated something even more powerful — a sense of humanity which transcends even the greatest of athletic achievements." □

Ken Anderson, Roger Craig among 9 seniors semifinalists for Pro Football Hall of Fame's 2026 class

By **JOSH DUBOW**
AP Pro Football Writer
Associated Press (AP)—

Former MVP Ken Anderson, versatile running back Roger Craig and former AFL star Otis Taylor are among the nine semifinalists for the Pro Football Hall of Fame's Class of 2026 in the seniors category.

A blue-ribbon committee reduced the list down from 34 candidates of players who last could have appeared in a professional football game in the 2000 season.

The committee will cut down the list to three finalists who will advance to voting by the full selection committee to be conducted before the Super Bowl in February. There also will be



Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Ken Anderson scrambles out of the pocket and out of the grasp of a Houston Oilers defender during the fourth quarter of an NFL football game in Cincinnati, Sept. 13, 1982.

Associated Press.

15 modern-era finalists, one coach and one contributor for the Class of 2026. Between four and eight new members will be elected in

the second year of this current format.

The other semifinalists are former star receivers Henry Ellard and Stanley Morgan;

special teams standout Steve Tasker; defensive lineman L.C. Greenwood, offensive lineman Joe Jacoby; and cornerback Eddie Meador. The candidates revealed Wednesday didn't include returning finalists Maxie Baughan and Jim Tyrer, who were eliminated in the latest voting.

Anderson was a four-time Pro Bowler for Cincinnati and won the MVP in 1981, when he helped the Bengals reach their first Super Bowl before losing to San Francisco. When Anderson retired after the 1986 season, he ranked sixth all time with 32,838 yards passing and 13th with 197 TD passes. Craig was a key part of San Francisco's dynasty in the 1980s with his ability as a

physical runner and as a receiver out of the backfield. Craig was the first player ever to have 1,000 yards rushing and 1,000 yards receiving in the same season, which happened in 1985, and he led the NFL with 2,036 yards from scrimmage in 1988 when he helped the 49ers win the Super Bowl. Craig also was part of the title-winning teams in San Francisco in the 1984 and 1989 seasons. His 410 yards from scrimmage in those Super Bowl wins are the third-most ever behind Hall of Famers Jerry Rice and Franco Harris.

Taylor spent his entire 11-year career with Kansas City, earning All-Pro honors in the AFL in 1966 and NFL in 1971. He led the AFL with 11 TD catches in 1967 and the NFL with 1,110 yards in 1971. He finished his career with 410 catches for 7,306 yards and 57 TDs and caught a touchdown pass to help the Chiefs win the Super Bowl following the 1969 season.

Ellard was a two-time All-Pro with the Rams and finished his 16-year career with 814 catches for 13,777 yards and 65 TDs.

Morgan spent most of his career with New England and is still the Patriots all-time leader with 10,352 yards receiving. His 19.2 yards per reception is the best ever among all 181 players with at least 500 receptions.

Tasker excelled on coverage of punts and kicks, recording seven blocked kicks and catching nine TD passes as a receiver on offense. He helped Buffalo win four straight AFC title games before losing in the Super Bowl and made seven Pro Bowls in his 13-year career.

Greenwood was a key part of Pittsburgh's famed "Steel Curtain" defense in the 1970s, earning two All-Pro honors and being part of four Super Bowl champions. Jacoby was a two-time All-Pro and a main member of "The Hogs" offensive line that helped Washington win three Super Bowl titles. □



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